

## Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 191881

FOR AMBASSADOR LEONARD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: UNRWA, KU

SUBJECT: PROPOSED TALKING POINTS ON UNRWA

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REF: STATE 189485

1. FOLLOWING IS MATERIAL YOU MAY USE IF APPROPRIATE IN DISCUSSIONS WITH KUWAITI OFFICIALS ON SUBJECT OF UNRWA.
  2. BACKGROUND: UNRWA HAS BEEN CHARGED SINCE 1950 WITH CARE OF PALESTINIAN REFUGEES WHOSE NUMBERS HAVE GROWN FROM 600,000 TO 1.7 MILLION. SERVICES PROVIDED DIRECTLY TO REGISTERED AND QUALIFIED REFUGEES INCLUDE HEALTH AND MEDICAL SERVICES; EDUCATIONAL COURSES AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING; AND FOOD RATIONS. UNRWA DOES NOT RUN CAMPS AND SERVES REFUGEES BOTH IN AND OUT OF CAMPS. IT IS SCRUPULOUSLY APOLITICAL.
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INFLATION, THE INCREASE IN SCHOOL-AGE REFUGEES AND THE FALL IN THE VALUE OF THE DOLLAR HAVE COMBINED TO DRIVE UP UNRWA'S COSTS AT A TIME WHEN ITS VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS ARE FALLING. RESULT IS APPROXIMATE \$20 MILLION DEFICIT FOR 1978, DESPITE U.S. SUPPLEMENTAL CONTRIBUTION OF \$8.5 MILLION ON TOP OF 1978 PLEDGE OF \$42.5 MILLION. DESPITE UNRWA'S NEEDS, KUWAIT'S 1977 CONTRIBUTION WAS ONLY

\$600,000, DOWN \$1 MILLION FROM 1976. (WE DO NOT HAVE 1978 FIGURE.)

3. TALKING POINTS:

A. UNRWA PROVIDES VALUABLE HUMITARIAN SERVICES TO PALESTINIANS.

B. PROVISION OF THESE SERVICES--ESPECIALLY IN EDUCATIONAL AREA--RELIEVES THE ALREADY HARD-PRESSED ECONOMIES OF HOST GOVERNMENTS (LEBANON, JORDAN, SYRIA) AND PROVIDES HOPE FOR THE FUTURE TO A PEOPLE VICTIMIZED BY HISTORY.

C. PALESTINIANS ARE A KEY FACTOR IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF A VIABLE ME SOLUTION AND THUS MUST BE MAINTAINED UNTIL THAT SOLUTION CAN BE REALIZED.

D. U.S. HAS BEEN THROUGHOUT ITS HISTORY A MAJOR SUPPORTER OF UNRWA. HOWEVER, IT MUST BE RECOGNIZED THAT WE CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO CONTINUE TO "PICK UP THE TAB."

E. WHATEVER THE MERITS OF OPPOSING POLITICAL REASONINGS, THE U.S. FEELS THAT ARAB STATES, DEMONSTRABLY ABLE TO DO SO, SHOULD CONTRIBUTE MORE CONVINCINGLY TO THE WELL-BEING OF THEIR FELLOW-ARABS.

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F. IF UNRWA IS NOT MORE EFFECTIVELY SUPPORTED--ESPECIALLY BY WELL-OFF ARAB STATES--THE CONSEQUENCES COULD BE DISASTROUS FOR THE AGENCY. WE WOULD NOT WANT TO COMTEMPLATE HOW THE SERIOUS CURTAILMENT OF ITS SERVICES WOULD AFFECT THE REFUGEES OR THE SOCIETIES WITHIN WHICH THEY NOW FIND THEMSELVES.

G. ACCORDINGLY, WE STRONGLY URGE KUWAIT TO CONSIDER INCREASING ITS CONTRIBUTION.

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## Message Attributes

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